

REMARKS

The application has been amended and is believed to be in condition for allowance.

As an initial matter, the undersigned appreciates the Examiner taking the time to discuss the application via telephone on November 20, 2008.

Claims 1-5, 8, 10-12, and 23-24 remain in this application.

Claims 9, 13-18, 21-22, and 25 are canceled without prejudice; Applicant reserves the right to make foregoing claims the subject of a divisional application, to be filed at any time during the pendency of the present application.

The indication, on page 2 of the Advisory Action of October 31, 2008, and page 1 of the Panel Decision for Pre-Appeal Brief Review, that claim 9 is directed to allowable subject matter is acknowledged with thanks.

Based on the foregoing, independent claim 1 is amended to include the recitation of allowable claim 9. Claims 10-12 are amended to depend from claim 1.

Claims 2-5, 8, 10-12, and 23-24 are also amended to address a minor formal issue; the foregoing amendments are non-substantive and do not introduce new matter.

Based on the indication of allowable subject matter, it is respectfully submitted that the claims have been placed in

allowable condition. Reconsideration and allowance of the claims are respectfully requested.

From the foregoing, it will be apparent that applicants have fully responded to the March 19, 2008 Official Action and that the claims as presented are patentable. In view of this, applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the claims, as presented, and their early passage to issue.

In order to expedite the prosecution of this case, it is requested that the Examiner telephone the attorney for applicants at the number set forth below if the Examiner is of the opinion that further discussion of this case would be helpful.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 25-0120 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17.

Respectfully submitted,

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